

EAST Search History

Ref #	Hits	Search Query	DBs	Default Operator	Plurals	Time Stamp
L1	1080	705/30.ccls. 705/31.ccls. 705/19.ccls.	US-PGPUB; USPAT; EPO; JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 12:06
L2	183	L1 and (zip geocode jurisdiction)	US-PGPUB; USPAT; EPO; JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 11:53
L3	2	"6298333".pn.	US-PGPUB; USPAT; EPO; JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 11:53
L4	2	("6298333").URPN.	USPAT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 11:53
L5	5	("0001830" "5335169" "5943657" "6148291").PN.	US-PGPUB; USPAT; USOCR	OR	ON	2006/11/27 11:54
L6	183	L1 and (zip geocode jurisdiction)	US-PGPUB; USPAT; EPO; JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 11:55
L7	85	L6 and (tax near3 (sales use rent\$3))	US-PGPUB; USPAT; EPO; JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 11:55
L8	1722	(tax near3 (sales use rent\$3))	US-PGPUB; USPAT; EPO; JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 11:55
L9	629	8 and (zip geocode jurisdiction)	US-PGPUB; USPAT; EPO; JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 11:56
L10	584	9 and (financ\$4 accounting transacti\$3)	US-PGPUB; USPAT; EPO; JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 11:57
L11	237	10 and ((calculat\$4 determin\$5 comput\$5) near2 tax\$2)	US-PGPUB; USPAT; EPO; JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 11:59
L12	234	11 and sale	US-PGPUB; USPAT; EPO; JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 12:00

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L13	102	12 and tax.ab.	US-PGPUB; USPAT; EPO; JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 12:01
L14	63	13 and database and server	US-PGPUB; USPAT; EPO; JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 12:02
L15	5	"498494".pn.	JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 12:05
L16	1	"4098494".pn.	JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 12:05
L17	0	"0498494".pn.	JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 12:05
L18	6	"98494".pn.	JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 12:06
L19	2886	tax.ab.	JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 12:06
L20	99	705/30.ccls. 705/31.ccls. 705/19.ccls.	EPO; JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 12:06
L21	12	20 and tax.ab.	EPO; JPO; DERWENT	OR	ON	2006/11/27 12:06

Dialog eLink: USPTO Full Text Retrieval Options**open url****A day in the life of a tax adviser using Windows**

Hicks, Sam A Love, Jerry L

Tax Adviser, v26n4, Page: 241-243, Apr 1995

Donald L. Leonard uses Windows to manage a variety of software, some that depend on Windows and some simply based on DOS. Leonard is a senior tax accountant for BlueCross/BlueShield of Missouri. Leonard works on an IBM PS/2 model 90, a 486 CPU with a clock speed of approximately 66 MHz. The packages he uses most frequently include: 1. FAST*TAX System 5 Workstation Federal and State Income Tax Package, Current and Prior Year, 2. FAST*TAX System 5 Workstation Federal and State Insurance Tax Package, Current and Prior Year, 3. CCH Access, a tax research CD-ROM, and 4. PKZIP Utility Software. Windows is the single program that has most influenced Leonard's daily activities.

The goal of this column is to offer ideas and insights on how to use computer technology to one's best advantage. This will be accomplished by explaining Mr. Leonard's use of computer technology in his day-to-day activities. His title at BlueCross/BlueShield is Senior Tax Accountant; his duties revolve around the gathering and organization of information relating to tax returns and their preparation. In addition to these core duties, there are the inevitable "other duties as assigned." These tasks or special projects may involve a one-time occurrence or require continual review and update.

Mr. Leonard works on an IBM PS/2 model 90, a 486 CPU with a clock speed of approximately 66 MHz. It has 8 MB of main memory, a 1.44 MB floppy disk drive, and a 400 MB hard disk drive. Attached to the basic CPU is a 545 MB Mountain tape drive, a second 350 MB hard drive, a Toshiba double speed CD-ROM player, a 3270 IBM terminal emulator, a Hewlett Packard LaserJet III, a US Robotics 14,400-baud modem, a mouse and the requisite parallel and serial ports.

Every computer should have certain basic programs and applications. The programs installed on Mr. Leonard's computer are Microsoft DOS 6.2, Microsoft Windows 3.1, Microsoft Word 6.0, Microsoft Excel 5.0 and Microsoft Foxpro 2.5. Through the use of these core applications, any other application can be emulated quite successfully. Due to the nature of Mr. Leonard's position, he also has many other applications, utilities, etc. on the system. The packages which he uses most frequently are:

- * FAST*TAX System 5 Workstation Federal and State Income Tax Package, Current and Prior Year.
- * FAST*TAX System 5 Workstation Federal and State Insurance Tax Package, Current and Prior Year.
- * FAST*TAX System 5 Workstation Life Insurance Premium Tax Package, Current and Prior Year.
- * Dun & Bradstreet PC LINK Software.
- * IBM 3270 Terminal Emulation Software.
- * PORTFOLIOS PLUS Tax Management Inc.--BNA Portfolios on CD-ROM.
- * CCH ACCESS, a tax research CD-ROM.
- * D&B INSIGHT Communications Program.

* TURBO TERM Public Domain Communications Program.

* PKZIP Utility Software.

Windows is the single program that has most influenced the performance of Mr. Leonard's daily activities. Even though a number of programs he routinely runs are DOS-based programs, he has set up DOS Windows (referred to as a non-Windows application) to run them. The only applications not run in Windows are his daily and monthly tape backups. Windows allows a user the ability to switch from application to application, whether DOS or Windows based, merely by using two keys, Alt and Tab. This saves the time in loading (starting) and unloading (exiting) that a DOS environment requires. Another benefit of using Windows is the Print Manager. This Windows application returns the system to the user (so other applications can be done) while it prints the selected items. The Print Manager only works if printing from a Windows application; it will not work if printing from a DOS-based application run in a DOS Window.

In the performance of his duties, Mr. Leonard spends a substantial amount of time analyzing various accounts for activity and other entries. Some routinely analyzed accounts have many threads of unrelated data running through them. Such data need to be independently analyzed. Generally, this can be done in one of three ways. The general ledger system is Dun Bradstreet Millennium running on an IBM mainframe. The mainframe system allows on-line real time queries into a specific account for a specific time frame. These queries can be made from Mr. Leonard's PC using the IBM 3270 emulation hardware and software. Sometimes, if there are multiple types of data in an account, a simple query will not suffice: in that case, he uses PC-LINK. PC-LINK allows the creation of a comma-delimited ASCII data file based on the general parameters defined by a query that he downloads to his PC. (In order to accomplish this, a file on the PC can be created to repetitively execute the same request with different conditions or parameters passed to the mainframe; these files are called scripts.) Once the data is downloaded to the PC, it can be either appended into a Foxpro database for future reference or the file can be loaded into an Excel 5.0 spreadsheet using the Text Import Wizard. Once loaded into Excel, all of the columns are set up correctly and no further parsing of the data is necessary. In a few simple additional steps, the data can be sorted based on information in a selected column, then subtotaled based on selected criteria, and finally, if needed, a report of the organized data can be printed. Excel 5.0 also has an additional feature that is very useful. It allows the organization of multiple sheets into one workbook or spreadsheet, thus enabling Mr. Leonard to organize the data in a logical group of spreadsheets or a workbook. This is very helpful in assembling data and worksheets as a backup of items on a consolidated return.

Database applications with Foxpro

Mr. Leonard uses Foxpro extensively for a number of different applications. On a monthly basis, he downloads the month-end balances for each of his firm's nine companies, prepares summary financial statements and trial balances, and generally uses the files for data query on his PC during the ensuing months. The data for the third, sixth and ninth months are used to prepare the quarterly Federal and state tax estimates. He has found Foxpro useful to develop other applications that assist him in the monitoring and performance of his duties.

One of the more important applications developed in Foxpro is the tax return due date system, a complete system to track due dates, extensions, returns filed and work to be completed by the required due date. With this system, Mr. Leonard can track the returns and prepared tax dockets required for preparation of several required returns by filing date. This application is extremely valuable in a small tax department.

Another database application relates to the additional reporting requirements due to the imposition of FASB 109. Mr. Leonard's department has to develop and maintain an ongoing database of deferred tax items and their book and tax values. With this database, he and his colleagues can prepare reports showing the net asset and liability balances needed for proper presentation in financial statement footnotes.

A database that has saved Mr. Leonard substantial time in the preparation of consolidated Federal and other tax returns is a system called the Income Tax Accounting System (ITAS). The ending annual general ledger balances for all companies are downloaded into individual systems by company. Reports are prepared on a tax return line basis showing the individual account number and balance making up the number to be reported on the final tax return. Tax adjustments to be reflected in the M-1 and M-2 areas of the return can also be entered and reflected on the reports. In addition to showing the individual line items on the return, it also shows the taxable income of the company, the M-1 adjustments and finally the book income. The reports are broken into balance sheet and profit and loss. The final reports are used in the preparation and entry of data into the Fast-Tax system, either the corporate or insurance system. They also aid in the

documentation of the adjustments to book income, by tying the workpapers to a particular line in the return and individual accounts to a given line on the final tax return.

Mr. Leonard's department is responsible for monitoring the performance and required additions to two separate deferred compensation programs. Foxpro has enabled Mr. Leonard and his colleagues to easily keep track of the historical balances of each participant in the various plans.

It is obvious that Mr. Leonard depends quite heavily on his database application package (Foxpro) in assisting in the efficient performance of his day-to-day activities. Any time a large number of related data items are involved, a database is the best and most efficient method of handling the data for queries, reporting, summarizing, statistics, etc.

Use of CD-ROM technology

The Fast-Tax corporate Federal, State, Insurance and Premium tax files are delivered on CD-ROM; thus, Mr. Leonard must use his CD-ROM to install these programs. A library of tax forms is built from files provided on the CD-ROM. The necessary data is then entered into the programs for the preparation of the required returns. The data comes from many sources (e.g., the ITAS system, Excel spreadsheets, and other documents, such as NAIC (National Association of Insurance Commissioners) reports).

Often, research has to be performed in order to determine if a position taken on a given set of facts is correct. With the availability of CD-ROM, this research has been made easier. Mr. Leonard always starts with the CD-ROM facilities, due to the extensive indexing and cross-indexing available when reviewing a topic. From the CD-ROM information, he goes into the paper services to read the court cases, letter rulings, etc. If needed, the on-line research facilities of CCH and other services are also available.

Other programs

The corporate fixed asset system is also on a Dun & Bradstreet Millennium system. Reports and queries can be run and downloaded (just as in the general ledger system). This facilitates the preparation of depreciation adjustments and property tax returns.

The D&B Insight system allows on-line lookup of problems, patches and corrections to be made to the general ledger and fixed asset system. This was very helpful last year when certain depreciation rules changed. The required patches were downloaded and applied to the system.

Mr. Leonard also uses a number of DOS-based utility programs in the maintenance of data for operation and backup purposes. One of the most useful of these programs is a public domain program called PKZIP. This program compacts data by removing repeating characters from a file. This allows the overall size of the file to be reduced, sometimes as much as 80% to 90% of the original size. Thus, more data can be stored on hard drives and copied to floppy diskettes for backup or other organizational purposes. The zipped files can be restored to normal size by executing PKUN-ZIP on the compacted file.

Note: It is important to keep in mind that when Mr. Leonard is working on the mainframe general ledger system, he is also working in Foxpro, Excel, Word, FastTax, and other programs such as PC-LINK. This is where Windows proves to be such a valuable tool.

The future

In reviewing Windows '95, several new features appear to have the potential of greatly increasing productivity. Probably the single most useful addition is the capability of multi-tasking. This allows the user to run multiple applications at once, such as entering into a spreadsheet program while copying from one disk to another at the same time. Another useful feature is the ability to cut and paste to and from a DOS window in Windows '95. Also, it is no longer required to have both Windows and DOS on a system in order to run a DOS application in a DOS window.

Windows '95 will run the application as if it were in native DOS mode, allegedly without any problems. Windows '95 also has a status bar at the bottom of the screen that stays on the screen no matter which application is being run. The status bar

shows icon buttons for each application currently loaded into memory.

It may sound as if Mr. Leonard has everything he needs and that everything works flawlessly together. Such a utopia has not yet occurred, and is not likely to occur any time soon. The more tools, CPU speed, hard disk storage and main memory his firm has, the more it seems to want or need. However, in the short term, there are certain things that would further facilitate Mr. Leonard's activities. Windows '95 is definitely one such application. Another improvement would be the completion of the Local Area Network (LAN) at Mr. Leonard's company. This would provide the ability to access E-Mail as well as other individuals' schedules. This would aid in the acquisition of information (sometimes a very long, slow process). Another major item that would help would be the implementation of a data server on the LAN, which would allow access to the data available on the general ledger and fixed asset systems.

While Mr. Leonard's day-to-day computer applications may not apply to everyone, they certainly give some ideas as to how work flow can be improved by transferring and manipulating data between applications and other systems.

Editor's note: Dr. Hicks, Mr. Love and Mr. Leonard are members of the AICPA Tax Division's Tax Computer Applications Committee.

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*Considered***Management software update. (includes related article on choosing the best system) (part 1)**

Schell, Ernest H.

Catalog Age, Volume: 8, Number: 5, Page: 91(4), May 1991**Management software Update**

Microcomputer technology continues to advance at an impressive pace. With 33-megahertz systems using an 80386 or 80486 chip (with the 80586 on the way), DOS-based software that was once barely able to handle more than 500 orders a day can process 5,000 or more orders daily with no problem.

The good news gets even better. DOS-based programs that continue to see the most development activity in the catalog management software (CMS) field are the top-of-the-line systems. While there are still some bare-bones options out there at bare-bones prices, the major contenders are the systems discussed below, and they show no signs of letting up on improvements.

Make no mistake: Each of these software vendors, with comprehensive DOS-based systems, sees itself in direct and deliberate competition with the others. If there was ever a confirmation of the benefits of free enterprise, the software business--and this segment of the software business in particular--definitely proves the point.

Indeed, a number of PICK and Unix systems can also be configured to run on microcomputers. Space prevents our reviewing those systems until next month, but they only add fuel to the competitive fires. The microcomputer market is hot, hot, hot!

Here's this year's roundup of updates, in alphabetical order by program name:

DM/Edge Computer Automated Marketing Systems Inc., 99 West Street, Medfield, MA 02052. Telephone 508-359-2960; fax 508-359-0139.

This multi-user, menu-driven program written in Dataflex, a versatile and powerful database, has been undergoing a massive revamping during the past 12 months. Not quite ready for release when this update was written, the new system promises even more flexible order-entry and fulfillment, with batch and on-line processing, complete promotion analysis including list and media management routines, customer demographics, flexible pricing schemes based on promotion and customer type, unlimited customer address and contact records with unlimited customized fields, tickler to-do lists, credits/debits processing, improved open account invoicing, item sales by category reports, and complex business address protocols.

Look for a full review of this completely revised program later in the year.

Mail Order Manager (MOM), Version 4.0 Dydacomp Development Corp., Box 641, Wayne, NJ 07470. Telephone 201-694-0779. It's been some time since we revisited this program. A sturdy entry in the CMS arena, MOM has withstood the test of time, with more than 225 installations in place by the end of 1990 and a new, well-organized user's manual. Written in Clipper-compiled dBase III, MOM runs on IBM XT/ATs or compatibles with 640K of RAM and 12 megabytes of storage for each 100 orders per day, assuming two years of order history and six years of customer history are kept on file (a purge module is included in the base system to archive orders and customers based on date of last activity, number of mailings and last order date). On an orders-per-day basis, Dydacomp recommends a 30mb drive for up to 99 orders per day, an 80-150mb drive for 100 to 299 orders per day, and a 300mb drive for more than 300 orders per day.

The single-user system, with a capacity of 900 orders per day, sells for \$1,195, with networked versions available for four stations (\$2,795), eight stations (\$3,795) and up to 50 stations (\$5,000). The actual cost of a system is likely to be higher, however, since you'll probably want to use more than one of the following optional modules: List Management System (\$595), Automated Shipping Calculation Module (\$385), Standard Customer Notices Module (\$195), Customer Account

Statements System (\$195), Refund Check-Writing System (\$195), Batch Processing Credit Card Module (\$195), Point of Purchase System (\$250), Zip/City Database (\$125).

Order-entry screens are set up for both consumer and business sales, with fields for company name and two-line street addresses. Customers can be accessed by last name, company name, zip code, last name/zip or customer number. The customer record maintains both original source code and current key.

Orders paid by check can be held for check clearance or processed immediately, at the user's discretion. Open account invoicing is also accepted. Credits on file for a customer are automatically displayed at order-entry and entered in the calculation of the amount due, with an option to override. (A bad-debt notice is displayed when appropriate.) Additional credits or discounts can also be added on the order. Underpaid orders are automatically invoiced. Overpayments can be credited or refunded at user option on each order. Orders can also be sent C.O.D.

Credit card approvals can be processed in batch mode or transmitted for approval or draft capture interactively through the McDonnell-Douglas Authorization Data Center System or First Data Resources.

Product information is available at order-entry through entry of the SKU number, part of the SKU number (to display all products containing that alphanumeric combination), one or more words of the item description, a product classification code, or even the vendor's code or part number. Inventory status codes show that an item is available, back-ordered (with expected arrival date), awaiting drop-shipping or drop-shipped. New SKUs can be added to inventory at the order-entry screen. You can also "force" a line item into back-order status, if, for example, your stock is low, the current order for that item is large, and you're expecting several smaller orders you want to fill immediately. You can also "force fill" an item if you know that stock has arrived but has not been logged into the system. If an item has been picked up in person, it can be "marked-as-shipped." Items drop-shipped can be verified later as having been shipped with a separate verification code. Partial back-orders can be shipped for in-stock items or held for single shipment at a later date.

A shortcoming in previous versions that considered orders "shipped" as soon as they were processed for "picking" has been corrected. Orders now have a separate status for picked, packed and shipped. Moreover, you can select from five different options to determine whether to print picking slips before packing slips or invoices, print all simultaneously, or print combinations thereof (along with customer notices and prospect labels). Plus, you can batch process orders for specified methods of shipping as well.

A new gift shipping subsystem in Version 4.0 permits entering header information only once for multiple ship-tos, printing a 35-character message on the shipping label and generating a mailing list report that lets you send the gift giver a summary of all items and recipients.

In addition, three-line comments can be automatically assigned to packing slips or invoices by source key code (up to nine digits).

MOM's inventory routines, which include a receiving module, allow you to enter full vendor data (including vendor's stock number) and reorder levels, plus a drop-ship code that will automatically issue drop-shipment paperwork whenever the SKU is ordered. Each SKU can also be referenced to others for cross-sell or substitution prompting at order-entry, or for "mix-and-match" product group pricing discounts.

You can set five price levels for all SKUs, and all prices can be over-ridden at order-entry. The product file lets you flag oversize items for special handling, and all products are assigned a bin number or location code. Item weights can be logged into the master file, allowing you to also specify the number of boxes to be used for each order. Actual weights can be entered to correct default shipping weights on the manifest using an edit routine. The system also accommodates product-specific shipping charges.

Inventory costing is done on an average cost basis tied into MOM's new methodical purchasing system, which permits up to four vendor/quantity/price combinations.

MOM provides all necessary reports for evaluating a moderate size catalog venture, including a "downstream key analysis" that lets you compare inquiries, responses and gross sales for each source code, and produce response curve analyses, which gauge the profitability of new keys based on previously run "model" keys. While inventory and source key reporting is rather sophisticated for a system of this magnitude, MOM lacks any real customer segmentation or

purchasing history routines. Accounting reports include accounts receivable, an order summary report, an account activity journal, a gross sales listing report and a sales tax collection report.

If you want more powerful customer analysis, you'll need the List Management Module, which lets you generate promotional mailing lists by selecting names on the basis of order/product type, type of name (customer/inquiry), key code, dollar amount, frequency, date of last order and nth name selection. The module gives you a running count of names selected, and permits storage of the selected database for future reference. Additionally, each record is given a "counter" that lets you keep track of how many times a name has been mailed, permitting you to purge non-responsive names at whatever point you feel is cost-effective. You can even produce bulk mail presort section labels for the beginning and end of a three- or five-digit zip sort.

MOM will generate both FTC notices and customer credit card notices (both invalid card number and credit denied), as well. FTC notices can be programmed to run at any interval from date of order up to 999 days. A facility for entering two-line notices on invoices can be used to accommodate monogramming, announce special sales, etc. And you can program different default messages for each source code.

An Automated Shipping Calculation Module provides on-screen calculations for all UPS shipping methods, plus printouts of these charges on UPS-approved manifests. Shipping cost is displayed on-screen based on weight of the package and zip code.

An optional Customer Notice Module is actually a word processor. The Customer Accounts Statements System provides accounts receivable aging. The Point-of-Purchase System is specifically designed for "front office" retail sales from a catalog inventory.

The system operates from a clearly organized master menu. Documentation is straightforward, clear and concise. A demo disk of the entire system is available for \$25 (credited to any future purchase).

The Mail Order Wizard The Haven Corp., 802 Madison Street, Evanston, IL 60202. Telephone 800-782-8278 or 708-869-3434.

Now in use at over 500 catalog companies, The Mail Order Wizard Version 3.12 features the following:

Maximum number of products--5400; maximum number of prices per SKU--10; maximum number of sizes per SKU--80; maximum number of ad codes--504; maximum number of line items per order--98; maximum length of product code--12 characters; maximum length of product description--34 characters; maximum number of active catalogs--4; maximum number of unique items per kit--30; maximum number of back-ordered items--20.

The program, written in Assembly language and requiring 640K RAM, sells for \$1,670 in a single-user version. A two-workstation version costs \$3,000; a three-workstation system costs \$4,000; and \$5,000 buys you a system that will operate on an unlimited number of workstations. Multi-user versions require a NETBIOS-compatible network such as LANtastic, Novell or 10-NET.

The Haven Corp. has also introduced the "Wizkid," a single-user system at half The Wizard's price tag (\$835), capable of handling up to 80 products and 5,000 customers. The new kid on the block has no UPS manifesting and no automatic credit card processing, but you do get 100 percent credit on an upgrade to the full Wizard system.

In the same vein, Haven applies previous payments as credit toward any and all upgrades on its systems. Free upgrades are available for one year from date of purchase. Thereafter, users may continue to receive upgrades and toll-free technical support for a flat \$200--a bargain.

As with many microcomputer systems, returns are still processed as a "negative" invoice. New to this version is the ability to process continuity orders. You can specify shipping periods in days, months or years, and charge for shipments at user-specified intervals, but you have to send the same SKU each time. That's great for a restocking arrangement with business customers or food marketers in the consumer field, but of no use for many other consumer continuity programs where product varies each month.

Other features include:

Order-entry: The Wizard now has an upsell prompt, ad hoc price discounts for each line item (absolute number or percentage) as well as the total order, automatic current customer reference (with annotations on account balance), invalid SKU number correction, separate wholesale and retail prices with two sets of discounts (with customer codes to trigger wholesale or retail prices), product category discounts, product search based on product description, add new advertising codes from order-entry screen, automatic city/state insertion from zip code, Spanish characters, automatic tax calculations on state-taxable items, date status for order-entry/future ship/ship confirm, six-line note field on invoice, replication of previous ship-to data on current order.

Fulfillment: Print picking slips/invoices immediately after orders entered, print labels (one- to four-up) with optional key code and message line, automatic label printing for drop-shipments (with item omitted from UPS manifest), automatic restocking of inventory from resalable returns, automatic continuity orders, a UPS-approved manifest on 8 1/2" x 11" paper stock, print C.O.D. tags, ship at specified future date (with credit charge processed upon shipping), user-defined UPS zone chart, extra label generation for self-shipping boxes, forced back-orders on individual line items.

Inventory: Warehouse bin locations, first-in, first-out (FIFO) inventory control, cost/price/weight/shipping charge.

Accounting: FIFO, find customer to post invoice payment by name/zip code/amount, print open account past-due notices. Prints reports for any period; lists invoices, bad debts, returns, taxes by taxing body, bankable deposits, credits issued or cashed in, accounts receivable, ad analysis, product performance and sales summary.

List maintenance: 400-product demographic/purchase reference field, "mail list notes" for bad debts, etc., produce list segment by selected codes, add ship-to address to customer mailing list.

Reports: Square-inch analysis, end-of-month summaries of quantity sold/YTD for each SKU/cumulative P&L per SKU, and comparison with how well other products are doing in up to four separate catalogs.

Response Professional Mail Order Management Software, Version 4.2 CoLinear Systems Inc., 1000 Johnson Ferry Road, Suite F-130, Marietta, GA 30068. Telephone 404-578-0000; fax 404-565-7881.

Response, written in Dataflex, has added still more features, functions and routines to its already comprehensive array. It has also produced an impressively organized new User's Guide that sports a handy subject index.

Many core programs in Response have been rewritten and streamlined over the past year, while the screens have been spruced up and the prompting scripts enhanced. Order-entry now displays total weight of items, bad credit cards are flagged on-line, and all customer file programs now include an upgraded match code program to identify duplicate entries.

Picking can be processed on a date range basis, order confirmation help screens are now easier to use, and total order shipping charges on partial-ship orders can be charged upfront on the first shipment. An optional Real-Time Order Processing Module lets you print picking tickets as orders are entered.

Cumulative media sales reports have been enhanced to print media descriptions and mail dates; the media return-on-investment report now includes fields for average gross/net profit per order and calculates on the basis of thousands of pieces per promotional code. An Original Media Performance report calculates the total number of orders and sales generated for all customers originally entered for a given media code.

Sales tax processing and reporting on credit card charges has been improved, there is better error-trapping on back-order releasing, and the picking ticket program will allow tickets to print by user-defined zip code ranges. Month-end update routines now automatically set vendor month-to-date counters and list kit sales MTD. Kit components can be displayed optionally at order-entry, and returns and refunds routines have been upgraded for better tracking. Gift shipping now includes future ship options, and the recipient's phone number can be printed on the shipping label.

Items can be priced by catalog and with default pricing; an optional module for Quantity Price Breaks supports four prices per break, to a maximum of six break-point levels.

The inventory file lets you find an item by description, just as in the order-entry screen. Expected receipt date is displayed with quantity on order for back-ordered items.

Finally, Response has issued a completely revamped price schedule: Single-User or Dedicated File Server--\$4,495; Additional Workstations--\$500; Data Compression Module--\$1,495; Gift Order Processing Module--\$595; Quantity Price Breaks--\$145; Inventory Kit Processing--\$595; Customer Returns and Refunds--\$495; Credit Card Processing via Modem--\$495; Accounts Receivable--\$695; Purchase Orders--\$495; Catalog Square-Inch Analysis--\$395; UPS Shipping Manifest--\$386; Multi-vendor Manifest--\$646; and Real-Time Order Processing--\$495.

Ernest H. Schell is president of The Communications Center in Jenkintown, PA, executive director of the Catalog Systems Management Network, and a catalog software consultant.

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Considered

PREPARE NOW TO KEEP YOUR COMPANY TAX-COMPLIANT

Electronic Commerce News , Volume: 2 , Number: 3 , Page: N/A , Jan 20 1997

Client-server Architecture Could Be Your Ace of Spades Adapt your sales tax-compliance software now to a multi-tier, client-server architecture to reduce the need for 20/20 hindsight once state and local jurisdictions settle their debates over taxing electronic commerce (EC) transactions.

The multi-tier, client-server environment offers your finance and accounting staff maximum flexibility to handle what could be a variety of new sales taxes, tax analysts say. Data distribution and data processing are more efficient in distributed environments, the analysts tell ECN.

"States are very concerned that the tax base they currently have may be eroded through the Internet," warns Thomas Smington, head of the information law department for Chicago-based McBride Baker & Coles. Smington, who also chairs the EC division of the Washington-based American Bar Association, says the dam on EC taxes is likely to break this year as states and local jurisdictions look for new ways to plug their spending gaps.

Just how big the break will be is unclear. "Everything is up in the air [right now]," according to Bruce Guptill, research director for EC and Internet commerce at the Gartner Group in Stamford, Conn. Most state legislatures have only just convened for the year, and it's "still too early to tell" where the debate will go, according to Pat Pelino, sales tax analyst for Vertex Inc., a tax software vendor and tax information provider in Berwyn, Pa.

Be Prudent, Be Prepared

But no one doubts that state and local jurisdictions soon will figure out how to tax EC, making it none too early to plan ahead. "It would be prudent to make plans now," advises Dan Sullivan, chief executive officer for TAXWARE International inc., a tax software vendor and information provider in Salem, Mass. "Large companies are hoping that the tax questions will go away. They will not."

Many states, for example, are considering:

- * surcharges on Internet access;
- * sales taxes on Internet purchases; and
- * levies on Internet services.

No state or local jurisdiction appears to be paying much mind to a U.S. Department of the Treasury recommendation for "neutrality on whether use of EC technologies should be taxed (ECN, Dec. 2, p. 6).

The Interactive Services Association (ISA), of Silver Spring, Md. also urges caution upon state and local officials. In a recent policy paper titled "Logging On to Cyberspace Tax Policy," the ISA is calling on states to "avoid imposing new taxes on online and Internet Services or expanding their interpretation of existing taxes."

The ISA is suggesting that any new taxes be:

- * based on a set of uniform definitions adopted by all the states;
- * limited to one sales tax rate within a particular state;
- * applied only to the prices of specific transactions; and

* levied at the sales outlet much as mail order catalog

transactions are billed.

Governor George E. Pataki of New York last week recommended that Internet access charges not be subject to sales taxes. Pataki is directing N.Y. State Department and Finance Commissioner Michael H. Urbach to implement recommendations from a Tax Department study that was mandated by New York state legislation in 1995.

The report concludes that nexus with the state, a criterion used for taxing purposes, is not merely created by having a non-New York company's advertising appear on a New York server or through a New York-based Internet service provider.

New York will not collect sales tax from companies that advertise on the Internet through a New York-based access provider, says Mike McKeon, Pataki spokesman. New York's recommendation is designed to encourage businesses to use New York-based companies for accessing the Internet, he says.

"We're very pleased [with the decision]," says Carol Cayo, government relations director for the Rosslyn, Va.-based Information Technology Association of America. "Governor [Pataki] seems to understand the economic importance of the industry it is fostering."

Taking a multi-tier, client-server approach allows companies to be ready for any changes as a result of any future state or local tax law requirements. A multi-tier, client-server approach enables a company to distribute the data and processing functions on the server and clients a myriad of ways, maximizing efficiency, says Jack Ferraioli, director of strategic alliances for Vertex.

A multi-tier setup allows many computers and departments to share the workload, Ferraioli says.

Personalize It

Although the best way to implement tax compliance software depends on your individual company's network architecture, make sure to at least distribute the data and the applications so they don't just rest on either the client or server by themselves, Ferraioli says.

He suggests making sure to divide up the responsibilities by:

- * placing tax data on a server. This allows the data to be

accessed through numerous client work-stations; and

- * placing the processing software on the client site to

maximize performance.

Operating in a multi-tier, client-server environment is preferable for large corporations, says Sullivan.

Plan for the Future

If the future is uncertain, the present doesn't have to be. Companies should consider adding into their existing database systems -- those from companies such as Oracle Systems Corp., of Redwood City, Calif., PeopleSoft Inc. of Walnut Creek, Calif., and SAP AG, of Walldorf, Germany -- their tax compliance software.

Solutions out there for corporations to efficiently take advantage of their existing client-server architecture and databases include products and services from Vertex and TAXWARE International.

Vertex is shipping at the end of the month Quantum for Sales and Use Tax Returns, a software system that enables a company to completely automate its sales and use tax returns preparation. Cost is based on the size of the company and customization of the products, Ferraioli says.

Corporations also can expand their EC-tax related capabilities with Vertex's Quantum for Payroll Tax, Quantum for Property Tax and CommTax telecommunications Tax Compliance System.

Keeping Up-to-date

Vertex also provides publications and information keeping companies up-to-date on the changing tax structures on the state and local levels. Publications include Vertex's National Sales Tax Directory, National Sales Tax Manuals, National Sales Tax Manual Topical reference and National Property Tax Manual.

TAXWARE recently released their WORLD TAX System, which combined with their SALESTAX system enables companies to calculate value-added taxes in both the United States and Europe.

The company also offers its TAXWARE INTERNET Tax System for corporations to calculate sales tax for goods sold over the Internet. The software offers Web mall shop owners and merchants a system to record and process merchant profile creation, customer address verification, exemption processing, product taxation, jurisdiction logic, tax calculation, transaction tracking, nexus or physical presence determination, international taxing and reporting.

TAXWARE also offers its new on-line calculator to enable corporate tax professionals access TAXWARE's Web site to look up rates and calculate sales tax for any taxing jurisdiction in the United States. The On-Line Calculator can be accessed at <http://www.taxware.com>.

The On-Line Calculator databases reflect the most current taxation laws and U.S. tax rates, says Sullivan. (Carol Cayo, ITAA, 703/284-5352; Sara Fitzgerald, ISA, 301/495-4955; Bruce Guptill, Gartner, 408/748-1111; Joseph H. Guttentag, Department of the Treasury, 202/622-5300; Mike McKeon, Gov. Pataki's Office, 518/474- 7516; Pat Pelion, Jack Ferraioli, 610/640-4200; Thomas Smington, McBride Baker, 312/715-5725; Dan Sullivan, TAXWARE, 508/741-0101.)

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